

July 11, 2002

Marlene H. Dortch
Secretary
Office of the Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW, CY-B402
Washington, DC 20554

Re: WC Docket No. 02-150
Application by the BellSouth Corporation for Authorization Under Section 271 of the Communications Act to Provide In-Region, Interlata Services in the States of Alabama, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina and South Carolina

Dear Ms. Dortch:

On behalf of the National Native American Chamber of Commerce (NNACC) and the National Indian Education Association (NIEA), we are pleased to submit these comments in support of BellSouth's application requesting Federal Communications Commission (FCC) authorization to provide long-distance services in Alabama, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, and South Carolina.

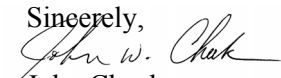
NNACC promotes job creation, economic growth, sustainable development and improved living standards for Tribal Nations, Native Americans, Native American businesses, and small businesses by working in partnership with business, universities, communities and workers. NIEA's mission is to support of traditional Native cultures and values, to enable Native learners to become contributing members of their communities, to promote Native control of educational institutions, and to improve educational opportunities and resources for American Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiian's throughout the United States.

BellSouth's entry into the long distance market will mean new choices for Native American's throughout the service area. While competitors continue to raise rates while their costs decrease. Despite massive advertising and aggressive marketing by long distance companies, most residential customers still pay basic rates, the highest rates available, and have not seen significant savings in their long distance bill as the cost of providing service has gone down. BellSouth would be a significant new competitor in the marketplace and would force rates to drop. Long distance companies have said that they will offer service to many business customers and high-end residential customers. If BellSouth can offer long distance service to all residential customers, then the long distance companies will be forced to meet the competition by offering local service or risk losing their customer base.

Underserved communities -- especially Indian Country, Native American businesses and schools -- are lagging seriously behind in technology and are in need of affordable advanced telecommunications services. These consumers are tired of waiting for the widespread availability of the benefits of communications technology. If BellSouth is allowed to compete in these five states, this will encourage accelerated deployment of advanced telecommunications capability needed to improve the quality of life.

We, therefore, request that the FCC accept BellSouth's application.

Sincerely,



John Cheek

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